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INT 193/1

(162)

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-200TH MEETING-

MINUTES

SECRETARY'S STAFF COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 14, 1946

IN THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE



Present:

The Acting Secretary (presiding)  
Messrs. Benton  
Braden  
Clayton  
Faby  
General Billdring  
Colonel Eddy  
Messrs. Farnuch (for Mr. Russell)  
Henderson  
Hickerson  
Vincent  
Miss  
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Dange  
Janison  
Schleicher

Absent:

The Secretary  
The Counselor

[Here follows a discussion of matters connected with the establishment of military attachés to certain countries.]

Establishment of Army and Navy Intelligence Activities at Certain U. S. Consulates (SC-200)

COLONEL EDDY opened the discussion by stating that he wished to make a few personal observations on the document, which had been prepared before he came into the Department. He pointed out that neither the Army nor the Navy had commented on the probability that other countries, in addition to those with which it was specifically proposed that we have an arrangement of this sort, would make requests for assignment of military attachés to their consulates in the United States. Colonel Eddy believed that our other intelligence activities in certain countries would suffer if we assigned men in uniform to consulates there. He assumed that these officers would have their security codes and pouches, and that they would report directly to the Army and Navy officials. He believed

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that it should be stated specifically that they would be under the general direction of the senior foreign service officer at the post at which they were located.

THE ACTING SECRETARY raised two points: First, the probability that other countries would request a similar arrangement, both of the United States and of those countries to which we assigned officers under the plan; and second, the responsibility of the National Intelligence Authority for obtaining the type of information desired under this program. On the second point, he believed that this move would be in the direction of dispersal rather than unification of the intelligence program. Moreover, he did not see what could be accomplished under these proposals which could not be accomplished by the National Intelligence Authority. COLONEL EDDY was of the opinion that the directive to the National Intelligence Authority gave it responsibility only for clandestine, rather than for general foreign intelligence. Under the present proposal it would be possible to obtain certain technical information which could not be obtained informally. In reply to a question from Mr. Benton, COLONEL EDDY stated that this type of technical military information was very important. MR. VINCENT pointed out that other countries would ask for the same privilege from those countries in which we had an arrangement of this nature. MR. BRADEN thought that the proposal would meet with serious objection in Latin-American countries if it were extended there. It was GENERAL HILLERLING's opinion that the Army believes the only kind of military intelligence worthwhile is that which can be obtained by a person in uniform from another person in uniform. He suggested, however, that a reserve officer in civilian clothes would be in a better position to obtain the desired information than would a military officer. In this respect he believed that the Army and Navy, by sending out a regular officer, actually obtain less information than they would under the arrangement he suggested.

MR. CLAYTON stated that it was not clear to him as to the scope of the activities proposed, or the kind of intelligence desired. Was it military, political or economic?

It was MR. HENDERSON's opinion that ninety percent of the information gathered by military and naval attachés is political and economic, and that much of it is obtained from the regular foreign service reports. Not over ten

percent

**UNCLASSIFIED**

177

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

INT 193/3

-X-

percent is of a technical military nature. He further pointed out that the proposal is a revolutionary one, although that in itself is not objectionable if a worthy purpose is to be served. If the proposal were adopted it would be the first time, during peace, that our military attaches would be attached to other than the regular diplomatic missions. Not only would it be a new trend, but other countries would inevitably request the same privileges. Furthermore, he did not think that many of the countries indicated by the Army and Navy would be in favor of the proposal, nor did he believe it to be necessary. Regular foreign service officers would be able to obtain all of the information desired by the Army and Navy.

GENERAL HILLDRING expressed the opinion that if this proposal were adopted it should be plainly understood that the information to be obtained should be limited strictly to military matters. He believed, moreover, that it would be difficult to convince the Joint Chiefs of Staff that economic and political officers could competently report on military matters. MR. HICKERSON believed that the military officials need and should receive all of the economic and political material which is obtained by the State Department and that the three departments jointly should give careful thought to devices for filling any gaps in information needed by the services.

THE ACTING SECRETARY requested Colonel Eddy to review the situation with respect to each location in which the Army and Navy requested military attaches in the consulates. He pointed out that most of the places suggested are dependent areas where we do not have a diplomatic mission, and therefore have no military or naval attaches stationed there. COLONEL EDDY replied that these military attaches would keep track of military developments in these areas and that they could be informed that they were not to be concerned with economic and political matters. MR. HENDERSON agreed that military officers would be able to perform a useful public relations job in these areas by visiting other military officers and establishments.

MR. VINCENT suggested that the problem could be set in one of the three main areas in which the Army and Navy were interested, namely, Bangkok, by building up a strong military staff there which could then make trips to other points in southeast Asia.

MR. CLAYTON

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

67,8

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

INT 193/4

-5-

MR. CLAYTON believed it would be very dangerous to adopt proposals in the document. We profess to be interested in preserving world peace but at the same time are proposing to station military personnel all over the world. In any case, he believed that officers should not be sent to any post without prior consultation with our officials there and at the missions in the metropolitan governments. MR. BENTON expressed agreement with Mr. Clayton. Even if the proposal is adopted he believed this would be the worst possible time to put it into effect. He was certain also that it would create rivalry with other countries and many governments would begin sending out military and naval observers.

THE ACTING SECRETARY believed that each of the three main areas presented somewhat different types of intelligence problems. In the case of southeast Asia we could build up our staff at bangkok, which could travel throughout the area and get the desired information. With respect to Central Africa, although he was not certain on the point, he believed the military was interested in possible uranium deposits. MR. HICKERSON suggested that the type of officers who would probably be sent to the Central African posts would not be the best qualified individuals to obtain the desired type of information.

Thirdly, some of the locations in the coastal areas seem to be quite different. THE ACTING SECRETARY was at a loss concerning the motives of the Army and Navy in requesting military attaches at these points.

MR. CLAYTON pointed out that if the Army has attaches at a particular point the Navy will insist upon having its attaches, and vice versa, and that the Air Force will probably follow. COLONEL EDDY referred to the possibility that this was only an initial request from these departments.

THE ACTING SECRETARY asked the Committee if all agreed that the proposal was unacceptable and that the War and Navy Departments be asked to re-examine their intelligence problems and their real needs beyond what would be provided by existing reporting facilities. MR. CLAYTON stated that it was very important that we try to improve our reporting from these areas.

Mr. HENDERSON

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MR. HENDERSON said he could quite well understand the Army and Navy point of view with respect to some of the places suggested, since we have not adequately staffed these posts. They can order their officers there; while we can do the same, in actual practice we do not do so.

MR. FAHY thought that the Department should be careful in turning down the request of the Army and Navy, although he admitted that they had not proved their case.

THE ACTING SECRETARY pointed out that we were not turning them down flatly but we wanted them to get started in another way, and to perform the function in a manner that would be more satisfactory from the standpoint of the Army and Navy as well as the Department of State. He expressed the opinion that the Army and Navy seem to take the point of view that the Department should negotiate for whatever the Army and Navy wants, regardless of the consequences. As a result of our negotiations we have in some instances gotten into trouble, and have not obtained what the Army and Navy wanted. It was his opinion that the State Department should advise the Army and Navy with respect to their requests, and that these requests should be adjusted to what was possible to obtain diplomatically. COLONEL EDDY asked if he might also express sympathy with the objectives of the Army and Navy but that he had misgivings about their methods.

IT WAS AGREED that Colonel Eddy should inform the Army and Navy that the Department was in sympathy with the objective of the proposal, but that we desire to examine the whole problem with them in the interest of obtaining a more effective and integrated foreign intelligence program.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Recorded by:  
Charles Schleicher

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